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Afghan link being probed as terror revisits capital after years

- Twelve killed, 36 injured in suicide bombing outside district courts
- Police say attacker came from outside Islamabad; bomber's route traced with help of AI
- TTP claims responsibility; explosive weighed 4kg
- Naqvi vows to punish masterminds; PM, president review situation

By Munawer Azeem and Ikram Junaidi

ISLAMABAD: A suicide attack outside the judicial complex housing the Islamabad district and sessions courts on Tuesday killed 12 people and injured at least 36, including four women and four policemen. It was the first such attack in the capital in nearly three years.

The blast occurred as Islamabad was hosting several international events, including the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference and the 6th Margalla Dialogue, while a tri-nation cricket series featuring Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe is underway, with a match in Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

Officials said the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had claimed responsibility for the suicide attack.

Police said a lone bomber blew himself up at the main entrance to the complex, located in the G-11 sector, after failing in repeated attempts to enter the premises, where hundreds of litigants and lawyers were present.

A lawyer at the scene, Mohammed Shahzad Butt, told AFP that there was a "massive blast", adding: "Everyone started running inside out of panic. I have seen at least five dead bodies lying at the front gate."

Rustam Malik, another lawyer, told the news agency that he "heard a loud bang at the gate" as he was entering the complex. "It was complete chaos, lawyers and people were running inside the complex. I saw two dead bodies lying on the gate and several cars were on fire," he said.

Police officers told *Dawn* that investigators had recovered a face, believed to be that of the bomber, from the scene. The remains have been sent to the

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Punjab heightens security of courts, judges and bars: Page 2

Peace, security and development interconnected: Gilani: Page 4

Capital terrorism: Editorial on Page 6

FORENSIC experts examine a car after a suicide blast outside the district courts in Islamabad.—AFP

Terror attack at cadet college foiled, students, staff rescued

- All five terrorists neutralised
- Roofs of nearby houses collapse due to intensity of the blast; nine civilians injured
- ISPR says attackers tried to replicate APS-style assault, received instructions from handlers in Afghanistan

By A.K. Wazir

LOWER SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: Security forces successfully evacuated all 650 individuals, including students, teachers and civilian staff, from Cadet College, Wana, on Tuesday following a terrorist attack on the institution.

The administration and army confirmed that the rescue operation was completed successfully, ensuring the safety of everyone present at the college.

On Sunday evening, security forces foiled a major terrorist attack on the Cadet College after militants rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the institution's main gate, the military's media wing said in a statement.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), three terrorists were killed in the retaliatory operation, while nine civilians sustained injuries. Roofs of nearby houses collapsed due to the intensity of the blast.

The ISPR said the attack was carried out by terrorists affiliated with the Indian proxy network Fitna al Khawarij — a term used by the state to refer to terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) — calling it a heinous and cowardly act of terrorism.

The assailants tried to breach the college perimeter, but their attempt was thwarted by the timely and resolute response of the security personnel. In desperation, they detonated a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) at the main gate, causing its collapse and damaging adjacent infrastructure, the ISPR added.

Demonstrating professional excellence and exceptional bravery, the security forces engaged the intruders, killing two

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Peace hinges on Kabul 'reining in' terror groups, says PM

- Shehbaz says Islamabad believes in peaceful neighbourhood, terrorists disrupting peace inside, outside Afghanistan
- Defence minister warns Pakistan has full strength to respond

Dawn Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday that Kabul must understand that lasting peace could only be achieved by reining in terrorist groups operating from Afghan soil.

"Afghanistan must understand that lasting peace can only be realised by reining in Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan and other terrorist groups operating from Afghan territory," PM Shehbaz said while addressing the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference in Islamabad.

In his remarks, the premier said that the theme of the conference, "Peace, Security and Development", could not be more timely and relevant.

He added that the theme was particularly resonant for Pakistan, saying that the country had always advocated for peace through dialogue and diplomacy.

"We firmly believe that peace and security form the foundation of sustainable national and regional development," he said.

"The true value of peace is most profoundly understood when we are confronted with the conflicts that continue to plague our world," he said.

The premier especially called attention to the recent border clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan, calling Islamabad's response "firm and decisive, teaching an unforgettable lesson".

He also deeply appreciated the efforts of Turkiye and Qatar in facilitating peace talks between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban regime.

"A peaceful Afghanistan holds the key to regional connectivity, peace, and prosperity," he said.

"This peace has remained elusive for decades. However, Pakistan has never lost hope. We believe in a peaceful neighbourhood and have been striving hard for this purpose," he asserted.

He regretted that terrorist groups continued to "imperil peace", both within Afghanistan and

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Pakistan seeks world help to stop arms flow to terror groups: Page 12

Justice Amin likely to head federal court as names being decided

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: Justice Aminuddin Khan, who currently heads the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court, is expected to be appointed as the Chief Justice of the upcoming Federal Constitutional Court (FCC).

Sources told *Dawn* the FCC would initially comprise six other judges — four from the Supreme Court and two from the high courts — besides the chief justice. The names being discussed for the inaugural composition include Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali, Justice Aamer Farooq, and Justice Baqar Najafi from the SC, while Justice K.K. Agha of the Sindh High Court and Justice Rozi Khan Barrech, the incumbent Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court, are being considered from the high courts.

Sources said that the initial strength of the FCC would be determined through a Presidential Order, while any subsequent increase in the number of judges would require approval through an Act of the Parliament.

The sources further disclosed that the President would administer the oath to the Chief Justice of the FCC, while the remaining judges would take oath from the newly-appointed Chief Justice.

Officials at the law ministry confirmed that the President, acting on the advice of the prime minister, would issue the formal appointment orders. They added that under

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Planned Gaza force shaping up despite internal warning

Several states remain cautious as US circulates revised draft resolution to be tabled in UNSC

By Anwar Iqbal

UNITED NATIONS: The United States has circulated a revised draft resolution to establish a two-year mandated stabilisation force in Gaza, setting in motion a process it hopes will lead to adoption by the UN Security Council (UNSC).

The draft, presented to the UNSC on Monday, triggered a "silence" period until 10:30am on Tuesday. Under this procedure, the council's 15 members must register objections or propose amendments within the allotted timeframe; if none are raised, consensus is assumed and the resolution proceeds to a vote, likely later this week, on Thursday or Friday.

The proposed force would operate under a Board of Peace (BoP), with President Donald Trump as its head. The board would also establish operational entities to oversee Gaza's reconstruction, economic recovery programmes, and the demilitarisation of non-state armed groups.

Washington has embedded the full "20-point"

Partition of Gaza a looming risk as Trump's plan falters: Page 12

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Ex-CJ seeks to protect SC's jurisdiction

- Justice Jawwad asks top court to set aside 27th Amendment
- Argues certain constitutional commands can't be altered in a way that destroys their essence

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Former chief justice Jawwad S. Khawaja on Tuesday challenged the 27th Amendment, seeking a direction that the Supreme Court (SC) retains exclusive jurisdiction to determine the lawfulness and constitutionality of the proposed amendment.

Filed through Advocate Khwaja Ahmad Hosain, the petitioner pleaded before the apex court to strike down or suspend any provisions in any Act of Parliament, including the 27th Amendment, which reduce or abolish any constitutional jurisdiction of the SC or which purport to vest any such jurisdiction in any other court or body.

The petition also requested the apex court to set aside provisions of the 27th Amendment, which relate to transfer of high court judges with a request that until a final decision of this petition and as a matter of urgency.

CJP Afridi urged to convene moot on 27th Amendment: Page 3

The ex-CJ explained that he has filed the petition to save the SC that he claimed was on the verge of being abolished as a constitutional court. By the time of hearing of this petition, the petition argued, the Constitution might have already been amended in a manner that purports to take away SC's constitutional jurisdiction.

Notwithstanding the terms of such amendment, it is the petitioner's case that the country's top court must hear this petition immediately, as at the date of filing of this petition, the apex court exists as a constitutional court.

The petition seeks to enforce the command of the Constitution, which stipulates that "the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured". The petition contended the question before this court was whether the constitutional jurisdiction of the apex court could be abolished.

The ex-CJ argued that he had "no personal interest" in this case, adding the relief sought was for the benefit of all citizens of Pakistan.

"This petition and any adjudication will have an immediate impact on the fundamental rights of citizens," he stated, adding the if SC's constitutional jurisdiction was abolished, the people would be deprived of an independent apex forum to approach for enforcement of fundamental rights.

Cornerstone of Constitution

According to the petitioner, the constitutional jurisdiction of the Supreme Court as an independent apex judicial body

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27th Amendment lands in NA amid opposition criticism

- Controversial bill likely to sail through today as coalition holds required two-thirds majority
- PTI slams bid to 'create another elite class'
- MQM seeks revival of its LG-related proposals in 28th Amendment
- PPP insists it won't compromise on 18th Amendment

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD: The controversial 27th Constitutional Amendment Bill was tabled in the National Assembly on Tuesday, triggering a formal debate that allowed treasury members to defend its merits and the opposition to highlight its flaws.

Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar introduced the bill, which is expected to be passed by the lower house of parliament on Wednesday (today), as the ruling coalition holds the required two-thirds majority.

Recalling the 26th Amendment debate, the minister said that at that time, "two main political parties, after much discussion, made a few adjustments in the promises made under the Charter of Democracy". He said coalition partners had been consulted and agreed on the establishment of a Federal Constitutional Court (FCC). He said the features related to the FCC in the amendment were based on the Charter of Democracy.

THE 27th Constitutional Amendment Bill was tabled in the National Assembly for debate on Tuesday.—White Star

Referring to Article 243, which deals with the command of the armed forces, the law minister said the government decided, after consultations, to bestow the rank of Field Marshal upon Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir in light of his achievements during the May conflict with India.

He added that under the proposed changes, no individual will have the power to deprive a national hero of the title of Field Marshal, Marshal of the Air Force, or Admiral of the Fleet. These titles will be for life, but if valid grounds arise for their withdrawal, parliament will decide after deliberation, he said.

On the issue of lifetime presidential immunity from criminal proceedings, Mr Tarar said a clause had been added to exclude periods when a former president holds public office.

Judiciary bulldozed, false gods created by controversial legislation: TTAP: Page 3

He also stated that Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi would continue to head the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) and the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) under the new amendment, based on his seniority. The CJP would also remain head of any other bodies he currently leads.

The law minister said the proposed five-member JCP panel would include the most senior judges of the Supreme Court and the FCC. The two chief justices would jointly decide the fifth member. If they failed to agree, the matter would be referred to the full commission.

'Another elite class'

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq opened the formal debate by allowing PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan to speak. He accused the government of trying to "create another elite class," referring to the proposed lifetime presidential immunity. He warned that "with the passing of this amendment, democracy here will only exist in name," adding that his party "will not accept" it.

The bill requires a two-thirds majority in the 336-member house. The ruling coalition commands this number, with the PML-N holding

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ON OTHER PAGES

Nepra snubs govt over tariff push

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority criticised the Power Division for attempting to fast-track approval of its proposed cheaper power package for industrial and private agricultural consumers without prior consultation. 'You are compromising your case by seeking instant regulatory approval,' said Nepra's Sindh Member (Technical), Rafique Shaikh. **Page 9**

Pakistan beat Sri Lanka in first ODI

A counter-punching century by Salman Ali Agha and Haris Rauf's fiery pace leads Pakistan to a six-run win over Sri Lanka in the first One-day International at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Tuesday night. While Salman's gritty knock carried Pakistan out of deep trouble for the hosts to post an above-par 299-run total, Haris bowled a red-hot spell (4-61) to restrict Sri Lanka despite the visitors looking dangerous early on. **Page 20**